

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9211

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, HO

SUBJ: THE FALSE IDENTIFICATION PROBLEM IN VISA APPLICATIONS

REF: STATE 016879

JUDGING FROM INS CONSOLIDATED INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY AND OTHER SOURCES, THE FALSE IDENTIFICATION PROBLEM IN VISA APPLICATIONS IS LESS SEVERE IN HONDURAS THAN IN SOME OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE AREA. HOWEVER, THE PRACTICE IS SUFFICIENTLY WIDESPREAD HERE TO WARRANT CONTRIBUTION TO DEPARTMENT'S STUDY. OUR REPORT FOLLOWS OUTLINE IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF REFTEL.

(A) WE ESTIMATE UP TO TEN PERCENT OF OUR NIV APPLICANTS (20,000 A YEAR) & FIVE PERCENT OF IV APPLICANTS (2,000 A YEAR) PRESENT FALSIFIED DOCUMENTATION OF SOME TYPE. SUSPECT SUPPORT AND SIMILAR DOCUMENTS EXCEED FALSE IDENTITY DOCUMENTS BY 10 TO ONE MARGIN. FISCAL IMPACT DIFFICULT ESTIMATE. COST TO POST FEW THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR FOR OFFICER AND CLERICAL TIME DEVOTED TO PROLONGED INTERVIEWS, INVESTIGATIVE WORK AND EXTRA FILE SEARCHES. MAJOR COST TO USG COMES FROM PERSONS WHO SUCCEED IN GETTING NIV'S AND BECOME "ILLEGAL ALIENS" IN U.S.

(B) PRINCIPAL TECHNIQUES IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY ARE:

1. FALSIFIED LOCAL JOB LETTERS (FIRM NONEXISTENT, ALIEN DOES NOT HAVE JOB OR GET STATED WAGE).

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2. FALSIFIED SUPPORT AFFIDAVITS FOR "VISITORS".
3. FAKE OFFERS OF SEAMEN JOBS ON SHIPS IN U.S. PORTS.
4. FALSE, ALTERED AND DELAYED BIRTH CERTIFICATES TO ESTABLISH NONEXISTENT PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP FOR IV PURPOSES OR TO SHOW AGE UNDER 21.
5. HONDURAN PASSPORTS OBTAINED WITH OTHER PERSONS' BIRTH CERTIFICATES AND IDENTITY CARDS.
6. FALSE PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE LETTERS WITH LABOR CERTIFICATION APPLICATIONS.

(C) ABOVE TECHNIQUES ARE USED BY PERSONS WHO KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE OR COACHING THAT THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE NIV OR QUALIFY FOR IV STATUS ON THEIR OWN MERITS. FALSE IDENTITY HONDURAN PASSPORTS HAVE BEEN PRESENTED BY COLOMBIAN COCAINE SMUGGLERS AND BY YOUNG MEN WHO HAVE BAD RECORDS (E.G. DEPORTATION) UNDER TRUE NAME. FAKE JOB LETTERS ARE PRESENTED BY UNEMPLOYED OR LOW PAID PERSONS (E.G. DOMESTIC SERVANTS). FALSIFIED BIRTH CERTIFICATES USUALLY PRESENTED BY LEGAL RESIDENTS (OCCASIONALLY BY U.S. CITIZENS) TO GET IMMIGRANT STATUS FOR NEPHEWS, OTHER RELATIVES AND ADOPTED CHILDREN.

(D) SOLUTION TO FALSE IDENTITY DOCUMENT PROBLEM RESTS WITH GOH AUTHORITIES. DECENTRALIZATION OF CIVIL REGISTERS TO HUNDREDS OF MUNICIPALITIES MEANS THAT AUTHENTICITY OF PERSONAL IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION DEPENDS ON CUSTODIANS' HONESTY. UNDERSTAFFED PASSPORT SECTION OF FOREIGN OFFICE ACCEPTS DOCUMENTS AT FACE VALUE AND HAS ALMOST NO INVESTIGATIVE CAPABILITY. EMBASSY CONSULAR SECTION ALSO UNDERSTAFFED IN FACE OF TWO FOLD RISE OVER PAST FOUR YEARS IN NIV APPLICATIONS. ADDITION OF ONE LOCAL EMPLOYEE (AT \$3,000 A YEAR) PRIMARILY FOR VISA INVESTIGATIONS AS RECOMMENDED IN MY LETTER JANUARY 20 TO UNDER SECRETARY BROWN WOULD HELP SOLVE PROBLEM.

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